the SHAKERITE
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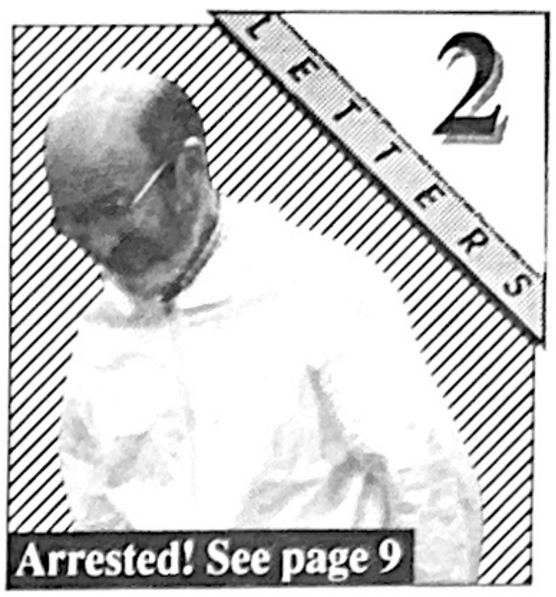


April 14 edition sparks debate

Twenty-two letters to the editor voice mixed reactions to coverage of racial issues

BY PETER NAGUSKY AND PHILLIP TURNER
Editor-in-Chief and Staff Reporter

The most recent Shakerite—dealing with, among other things, racial imbalance in classes, black achievement, racial tension among students, the play "People of Color" and "Black Power" vandalism at the high school—has been a source of debate since its publication on Friday, April 14.

That day, at least fifteen offended students gathered outside room 224, where the Shakerite staff meets, to show their disagreement with the handling of these sensitive topics. Twenty-five letters to the editor followed (see excerpts above and letters on pages 2,3 and 4) and the reactions were as diverse as they were numerous.

"We gathered facts, wrote stories about issues we felt confronted the school and drew our conclusions from there in a staff editorial," said associate editor Michelle Brode. "Responses ranged from outwardly offended to encouragingly supportive, but the fact remains that this whole year we'd received 13 letters, and for our May edition alone, we have 25. That, by itself, speaks to the outpouring of discussion the articles have prompted."

Yet many students, parents, faculty members and residents in the community have reservations about the way in which the Shakerite stated their stories on racial issues. A big part of the problem stems from the racial makeup of the student-run, monthly newspaper, according to Shaker resident Anne Adamson, who responded in a letter. Although the Shakerite opens its membership to all students, only three black students are on a staff of 35. Brode admits this imbalance, for whatever reason, has left the staff disadvantaged when attempting to cover racial issues.

"[Black power] is a term that has been used since slavery," wrote senior Pamela Billingsley, who—like many other students—objected to the references in the April 14 edition to "Black Power" vandalism. "It stands for equality among races, not just blacks. But you must remember it originated from black ancestors. The white society in our school has misinterpreted its meaning—to create equality in our society and school. Black Power's meaning is not, 'Well, I'm black. I'm better than you!' Black Power not only means equality but opportunity, as well as the success of black people."

Some thought that the April 14 edition not only failed to encourage students to solve racial problems, but actually belabored the point by printing numerous articles on similar subjects, continually referring to the same negative incidents. There were also cries from members of the "People of Color" cast as to the validity of the quotations that were printed.

Apparently, in its interviewing and research, the staff overlooked two major groups that represented substantial portions of their coverage—black teachers and level two students. And letters to the editor stressed that in tackling such a strong topic, sensitivity needed to be more carefully observed.

Juniors James Gradin-Washington and Eric Mumford and seniors Charles Cox and Edna Gillard expressed a common complaint: "We don't believe you thought nobody would be offended when the paper made comments like 'Black History Month could've ended sooner' and equating 'People of Color' and Jesse Jackson's campaign with activities of the Ku Klux Klan. Even leaving room for implications is unacceptable."

Another popular concern was the lack of "equal coverage" to racial tension. Readers said the Shakerite failed to mention the anti-black vandalism on school property and the concept of "white flight"—which many respondents feel directly relates to the racial imbalance in classes and the leveling story, but was never expressed. *Also, many felt as if the newspaper was attacking "the one month we have" to celebrate black heritage, by harping on the negative and implying that Black History Month was to blame for all the tension.*

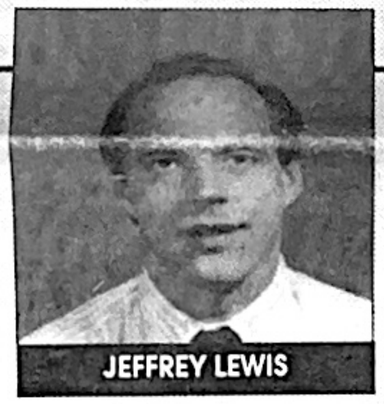
Senior Greg Stern places a lot of the blame on the Shakerite. Others, like senior Rachel Jemison, believe the problem lies within the students. Senior Andy Miller thinks "the change has to come from the administration." Guidance counselor Kenneth Looney feels there has to be more parental involvement. Assistant Principal Desadre Lawson says "we need to push the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and other public relation organizations to be more involved."

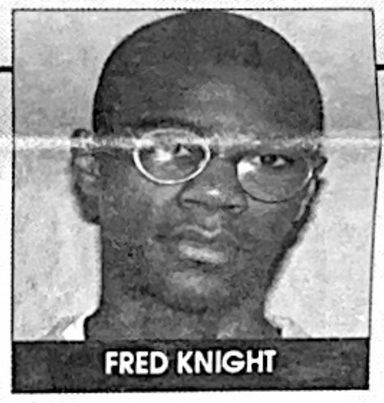
But after all the finger-pointing, will the stories result in an improvement in race relations—as the Shakerite claims to have attempted to spark? Some readers feel it will. Others believe it will have just the opposite effect.

Senior Marlow Taylor says she knows that "if we are going to solve our problems we need to first bring them out in the open and discuss them." And Spanish teacher Dr. Norma Guice complimented the Shakerite for "thoroughly, responsibly and professionally" covering sensitive concerns and wrote to the editor, "universal popularity may not be attainable. Prize your integrity because you have maintained that above all else."

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS

I found it very disturbing that in the last issue of the Shakerite you printed only negative acts which you believe were done by black students. What about the negative acts which appeared to be done by white students, such as the "No Blacks Allowed" sign posted above the Egress, or the bomb threat at the beginning of the school year? —JENNIFER PARKER, Sophomore


JEFFREY LEWIS


FRED KNIGHT

I congratulate the Shakerite for its provocative issue . . . Certainly issues of racial relations and the leveling system need to be addressed by our students, staff, administration and community. Hopefully your journalistic approach will spark such an examination and foster positive communication among all of us. —R.J. LEWIS, Guidance Counselor

Students in my senior English class read in silence—whether awakened to, alarmed by, or in awe of—the professional reporting of the reality that exists in this high school. Thank you for what I deem accurate, candid and responsible journalism —ROBERT H. JOHNSON, English teacher

I am aware of the sincerity of your attempt to address racism; but what you accomplished was a shirking of responsibility . . . I think the real everyday issues, such as racial separation in the cafeteria, in statistics, in clubs, in publications and at parties deserved more attention. By concentrating on limited issues, we continue to fool ourselves. —FRED KNIGHT, Senior

Racism, though a problem, was blown up to a disproportionate size in the last issue. Yes, the topics did merit an article but not the entire paper! Making the problem bigger than it is will not help the situation any, but rather throw kerosene on an already burning fire. —ZAK BURKONS, Freshman

The black students at this school feel that one month our of a year will not hurt anyone and can certainly broaden and better the views of those ignorant of black history that has taken place in the United States. Why not? We study white history every day. —RACHEL JEMISON, Senior

RITE ON
Shakerite staff thinks it's time for a new student group 4

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Four pages help illustrate what kind of season this spring is blossoming into for the red and white 5

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GROUNDSMAN, CULEK, COVERAGE, TENSION

To the Editor:

I liked the article, "Remember what the Groundsman had to say," by Randi Schmelzer. It reminded me about the time I was going to do LSD with some friends, but I chickened out because I was scared about not coming out of it. My friends say "you have to be in touch with yourself in order to try that hard of a drug."

I've stopped hanging around all of my using friends and don't care to have anything in common with them anymore because of what I know in my heart and what I know is right in my life. I know now that drugs are not cool and anyone who is using them is dumb.

All should appreciate life and understand what it means. If you don't know what life is, then you are messed up. A lot of my friends say "drugs are better than cigarettes because they won't mess up your lungs," but I know drugs will alter the brain and kill its cells and I tell them that.

Some of my friends have killed themselves under the influence of the drug they were taking. I wish people who are about to take drugs would think about their bodies before taking the drug and remember what the Groundsman had to say.

—BRIDGETTE GLASS
Senior

To the Editor:

The recent loss of my son to leukemia has left me with many more questions than answers. However, throughout the last two years I learned the importance and the meaning of the support I enjoyed from the high school students and staff. Throughout the entire process of clinic visits, remissions, relapses and especially during my son's bone marrow transplant I was blessed with moral, financial and spiritual support. The appreciation I have as a result of the concern of so many is something I have great difficulty expressing. For all of the help, kind words and thoughtful notes, I am thankful.

—KENNETH CULEK
Science teacher

To the Editor:

I offer my commendation of your continuing excellence in high school journalism. Your most recent, April 14 issue certainly was a hallmark of sensible coverage of sensitive issues.

Students in my senior English class read in silence—whether awakened to, alarmed by, or in awe of—the professional reporting of the reality that exists in this high school. Thank you for what I deem accurate, candid and responsible journalism.

—ROBERT H. JOHNSON
English teacher

To the Editor:

We would like to express our dissapointment in the lack of coverage on the band and music department in general. Last year, we received virtually no attention and were told it was because of a lack of information. That certainly cannot be the case this year. In just a short time, we have risen from being a small, unrecognized musical group to being one of the largest bands in Cuyahoga county with a program that other local schools regard as a model. We can now provide you with enough information to fill a centerpiece. Here is just a taste of what you have been neglecting:

About 170 students are enrolled in band, about ten percent of the entire school. And if you include the excellent choir and orchestra programs, that figure approaches 20 percent. We are probably the most active group in the entire district with well over 40 performances a year. Plus, with all the racial tension coming to a forefront, it is nice to know that we are one of the most racially integrated groups in the school, and happily so.

As a group, the band, has earned much recognition. The point is, however, that band teaches students not only to make music, but about interacting with people. We have finally come into our own. We are recognized as an excellent program throughout the state and even some parts of the nation. Why can't we be appreciated in our own school?

—ELENA ANDERSON, DAVID ERNST, VERONICA JOHNSON, RON JOHNSON, KIM PALMER AND MATT PICKUS
Seniors on The Band Council

SHAKERITE ARTWORK BY RICK SMITH

To the Editor:

I want to compliment you and your staff for a year of excellent reporting of the news. It was not surprising to me that your newspaper garnered as many honors as it did. You deserve them.

"News" is oft times controversial, and the mark of a newpaper's excellence is not only in its gathering of facts but in how, and how cogently, it presents these facts to the public.

You have covered many sensitive concerns thoroughly, responsibly and professionally—with ethical concern for the welfare of our school and all of our students.

Universal popularity may not be attainable. Prize your integrity because you have maintained that above all else.

—DR. NORMA W. GUICE
Spanish teacher

To the Editor:

In the April 14 issue of the Shakerite, your editor invites readers to "give a special look to the masthead at the bottom of this page and carefully inspect the names of the reporters." The edition focuses on racial imbalance in academic levels, students segregating themselves in activities and "racial tensions" of predominantly white students. I read the masthead. What I saw—please correct me if I'm wrong—was a list of predominently white students. If the Shakerite, in the best tradition of investigative journalism, has exposed problems in hopes of motivating people to solve them, why not include yourselves? To be "part of the solution, not part of the problem," it will be necessary to reach out actively, not simply to "any" students in grades 8 to 11, as you have done. But especially reach out to black students so more will sign up for the journalism class which puts out the paper and join your staff.

Congratulations on a provocative issue!

—ANNE B. ADAMSON
Shaker Hts. resident

To the Editor:

I am concerned about the recent racial topics appearing in your April 14 issue. I am an Afro-American and very proud of my heritage. As the very controversial SWAE poster stated, **"Black is learning at an early age, equality is skin deep,"** most blacks are judged by their skin instead of the content of their character. As an Afro-American, I've learned to accept all racial slurs as ignorance on the part of the person speaking. I also learned at a very young age, that a "nigger" was a dirty, ignorant person. Most of the time the person who made this remark displays more of a "nigger" characteristic than I'll ever have in my body.

I began young to accept people for who they are and not for what color they are. God created all men equal; what makes one color superior to another?

As with Laura Shapiro, I am angry that this whole racial issue was even brought up—this is 1988, not 1959. Up until the time that racial tension has surfaced in the paper, I don't think there was even a problem. The problem started with those who brought up the issues. Now that the issue is "hot and heavy," the instigator wants to wash her hands of it.

—CALLAWATIE BATTS
Senior

To the Editor:

Racism is a real problem in our school, but the way it was portrayed in parts of the April 14 issue of the Shakerite seemed to blame it on "Black Power." Black Power is better associated with economic and educational advancement rather than discrimination or voilence. There is possibly more to Black Power than that, but it surprises me that other racial slurs like "White power" are going unnoticed.

—HIRAM F. CROWDER
Senior

To the Editor:

In the last issue of the Shakerite, two main issues—racism and drugs were discussed. I felt your insert on drugs was non-biased and well presented. Contrary to this, I felt the section on rascism lacked objectivity.

Rascism, though a problem, has been blown up to a disproportionate size in the last issue. Yes, the topic did merit an article but not the entire paper! Making the problem bigger than it is will not help the situation any, but rather throw kerosene on an already burning fire.

—ZAK BURKONS
Freshman

To the Editor:

First I want to congratulate the Shakerite staff on its provocative issue of April 14, 1988. Certainly issues of racial relations and the leveling system need to be addressed by our students, staff, administration and community. Hopefully your journalistic approach will spark such an examination and foster positive communication among all of us.

Despite this overall praise, I do raise contention with the Shakerite's statement that "...counselors still encourage black students to take easier courses instead of challenging themselves..." The Guidance Department, in coordination with Dr. Rumbaugh and Department Heads, is—and has been—encouraging black students to enroll in more challenging classes and also to get involved with other personal growth experiences. But the final decision of level selection and particpation is up to the student and their parents.

Instead of pointing the finger of blame towards the Guidance Department we need to first take a hard look at the leveling system itself. Secondly, if the current leveling system survives such scrutiny *we need to help black students avoid anti-upper level peer pressure and provide* **a working support system for black students who choose to enroll in more challenging courses.**

—R.J. LEWIS
Guidance Counselor

To the Editor:

Black Power is a word brought about by our black and white ancestors. The cause was slavery. I am very concerned with the way Black Power was illustrated in our school newspaper, the Shakerite. The reason why all this controversy was brought out into the light was because the term Black Power was defined wrong.

I feel it is very good that its existence in Shaker was finally recognized. It is a problem that needs to be discussed. It is a term that has been used since slavery. It stands for equality among all races, not just blacks. But you must remember it originated from black ancestors. The white society in our school has misinterpreted its meaning. Its meaning is to create equality in our society and school. Black Power's meaning is not, "Well I'm black, I'm better than you!" Black Power not only means equality, but opportunity as well as success of black people.

Black people are rising to the top of the mountain, not only in the political aspect but in every aspect. I feel it was blown out of proportion, due to negative statements printed in the Shakerite. Only one side of the story was printed—the white point of view and not the black.

I feel that sooner or later there will no longer be such a thing as a black or white person due to the fact that there will be a lot of intermingling among our two races. Whites won't be the superior being and blacks won't be the inferior being. There will be such a few number of black and white people that they will not influence the majority.

—PAMELA BILLINGSLEY
Senior

■ Continued on next page

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RACIAL TENSION, CONT.

To the Editor:

Having read your articles on the "racial tensions" within the walls of our high school, we have come to the conclusion that the student-journalists at this school are ill-equipped to discuss—let alone write and print—anything involving the strained race relations at Shaker. Once again, as it is with most media presentations (generally speaking) on the subject we find that somehow, no matter how subliminal or blatant, the Afro-American is made to look like a lazy, good-for-nothing. It is counter-productive to the educational process, as well as being the chief instigator in acts of racism and/or violence.

As "black" students at Shaker, we get the feeling that you're just being tolerated, or that in order to "integrate" one must adopt a eurocentric attitude about things, or be labeled a racist for trying to grasp the education that Shaker will not provide. That is the quest for one's heritage: for without knowing where you have been you cannot know where you are going.

I don't believe you thought nobody would be offended when the paper made comments like "Black History Month could've ended sooner" and equating "The People of Color" and Jesse Jackson's campaign with activities of the Ku Klux Klan—even leaving room for implication is unacceptable. It's not just bad journalism: pure slop, and slop is for pigs; not for the consumption of the student body.

In conclusion, we feel as if the Afro-American at Shaker is tired; tired of just being good dancers. Tired of Euro-American History. Learning about all these "great" men, never being able to find ourselves in the picture. Were we not the first astronomers? The first mathematicians? Architects? Not just the first—the masters.

Above all, we are tired of your brand of violence, yes violence you impose through your rag of a paper. Tired of the insecurities of a community failing to come to terms with its acts of individual and collective racism. Your paper owes the Afro-American community an apology. And in the words of one of those "black" leaders, Malcom X: "We want it now...no not now...yesterday. Today isn't soon enough."

—JAMES GRADIN-WASHINGTON, ERIC MUMFORD, EDNA GILLARD, CHARLES COX
Two juniors and two seniors

To the Editor:

The editorial "Racism Reflects School Policies," stated that "counselors still encourage black students to take easier courses instead of challenging them with tougher, AP or level 4 classes." This is simply not factual. As a counselor, I and the other counselors have not and do not encourage black students—or any students—to take "easier" courses. In fact, I encourage black students—and all students—to take a challenging and rewarding program. Please keep in mind, however, that while I may encourage a student to select courses or levels, the student and parent have the final choice of course and level.

I believe the entire school, including the counselors, must look for better ways to have more black students enter and remain in upper level courses, though.

—ALLEN GRIGSBY
Guidance Dept. Head

To the Editor:

Some of the articles in the recent Shakerite have aroused quite a bit of unnecessary controversy. The paper insists that there is a major racial problem to be dealt with. I insist that there is not.

Too many people, white and black, are trying to create a problem that does not exist. Julie Alfred's cover story, "Racial imbalance linked to leveling," upsets me the most. The article seems to be implying that the school is to blame for the imbalance of blacks in higher level classes, which in turn is responsible for the school's racial tension.

That is absurd. If there is anyone to blame for any racial substandards by leveling, it is the students themselves. It is the students who decide what classes they want to attend, not the school. If blacks really want to be in level four and five classes, all they have to do is say so.

—GREG STERN
Senior

SHAKERITE ARTWORK BY RICK SMITH

To the Editor:

My focus is on racial leveling in school. I think that leveling is a big problem at Shaker Hts. High School. Much like a label put on students, Shaker has been known to have a tendency of all black classes when the ratio of blacks to whites is 50/50 within the school.

Often counselors discourage black students by suggesting a lower level to black students, according to my fellow students and others. I'm not trying to place all the blame on the counselors. It is only part of it.

I have two or more classes which are all black or have one or two whites. The reason for acceptance in lower level classes is the lack of academic push by parents and, moreso, the teaching staff. Many times I hear that Shaker is integrated, but just because you have desegregation in numbers at a school does not mean it is integrated. Mr. Springstubb's reasoning is correct about leveling—the division is primarily racial.

—RAY OLOWU
Senior

To the Editor:

In your last issue, "the Rite Idea" could not have been more wrong. In an attempt to cover racism in Shaker, you focused on three issues: "People of Color," the infamous Students Working for Academic Excellence (SWAE) posters and the vandalism of the Jim Morrison mural. And in retrospect, each of those were undoutedly connected to blacks and Black History Month. Firstly, I would like to reiterate the importance of black history. We, both blacks and whites, have been taught very little about black history, and Black History Month serves as a supplement to the regular history we learn.

I have also heard much criticism about "People of Color" from many who had not even seen it. For those of you who didn't attend, it was an extremely professional production. I didn't see anything written about that. Those berating the musical have blamed it as a cause of other unfortunate occurences. But to create such a correlation is as ignorant as the incidents committed.

Rafe-Lewis Harvey has successfully defended the purpose of the SWAE poster which read in full: "Black is:learning at an early age that equality is only skin deep." But in addition, I don't understand how anyone who is not black can even lead to an understanding of such a statement. We can look at the presidential campaign as an example. When the press tells us that the country isn't ready for a black president, black kids across the nation are getting the message, "You can't be President because you're black."

Lastly, the vandalism of the Jim Morrison mural is disgraceful. But should the actions of one person be the foundation of our complaints and concerns? I can write a dozen incidents which display equal stupidity but were carried out in different, less visible ways.

I am aware of the sincerity of your attempt to address racism in Shaker, but what you accomplished was a shirking of responsibility and directing towards two innocent victims and an ugly act committed by a single student. I think the real everyday issues, such as racial separation in the cafeteria, in statistics, in clubs, in publications and at parties deserved more attention.

By concentrating on limited issues, we continue to fool ourselves. We can no longer put the blame on blacks and Black History Month, as the last issue did. It is time for me, the Shakerite and for all of the students of Shaker to realize where the real problem lies, the problem within ourselves.

—FRED KNIGHT
Senior

To the Editor:

I found it very disturbing that in the last issue of the Shakerite, you printed only the negative acts which you believe were done by black students. What about the negative acts which appeared to be done by white students, such as the "No Blacks Allowed" sign posted over the Egress, or the bomb threat at the beginning of the school year, which was a racial act against blacks at Shaker.

I also found it disturbing that racial statistics were used in the article about leveling, but not in the articles on drugs. What are the statistics between blacks and whites? Is there something you are trying to hide?

Apparently the subject of Black History Month hasn't been presented to the white students of Shaker in the right manner. Black history was ignored and withheld in American history. It is still not included in most history books. Therefore, Black history is necessary to aquaint and remind blacks and whites the role of black people in the shaping of America. Hopefully, one day there will be no need for Black History Month. Perhaps in the future, Black history will be considered a part of American history.

The racial problem at Shaker doesn't just revolve around students. The faculty and staff play a major role. I, and many others, hope that Shaker will work together to resolve this dilemma.

—JENNIFER PARKER
Sophomore

To the Editor:

The last issue of the Shakerite was extremely disturbing to me and my family. The major emphasis was on negative issues, including racial problems and drugs. To me, the problems with drugs were hardly as offending as the instances of racial disturbance. Many of the problems seemed to be minor and simply exploited out of proportion. The reaction to this exploitation among the students is the most disturbing, though.

"It's beginning to feel like blacks are prejudiced against whites rather than the other way around," a quote from (an anonymous student in) the last paper I found most amusing. I should apologize to anyone I have upset by being more than upset by the ignorance of quotes like these.

One of the major reasons my family moved to Shaker Hts. was because we saw it as a racially balanced community where a mixed family, like my own, could peacefully live and interact within the community. My family has had no problems with race in any way as far as the school system or the community are concerned.

How could a person living in Shaker Hts. and attending the school's classes still have such fears and ideals of a different race as the paper shows Shaker students to have. I am confused about this issue's effect on the community. Are we truly integrated or are we segregated but overlapping to look integrated?

—KEVIN RIGHTLEY
Senior

To the Editor:

The "People of Color" article in the Shakerite brought about a lot of commotion and deep feelings. It's about time Shaker has brought out some of their opinions and viewpoints.

I've noticed some racial tension ever since my sophomore year at Shaker. I've noticed how teachers try to pretend that everything is O.K. and integrated properly. But this is a joke!

The play should have been able to perform at least two or three days, instead of just one. But I get it, since it was a black history show not run by the school, it could be viewed one day only. And the "Winter Ball" which Shaker cancelled because all blacks were attending. So the school refunded all the ticket money and claimed they had not sold enough tickets even though over 200 blacks had bought tickets.

When I think of Shaker, full of racism, it makes me, as a black, see the true facts. I know people here at Shaker who have tried to cause problems. Maybe I was hanging with another white or black; guy or girl. It's not a sin to be with someone of the opposite race. It's not only whites who get upset but blacks also. I guess each race feels that you are letting theirs down.

Maybe, just one day, everything in the world will be able to live peacefully and in unity, just like the Bible foreshadows. If we are going to solve our problems we need to first bring them out in the open and discuss them!

—MARLOW TAYLOR
Senior

■ Continued on next page

SHAKERITE

"It's time for a new student group..."

A solution?

Though some deny it, it is clear that racial tension is affecting the attitudes and behaviors of many high school students. The Dialogue '88 program seems like a step in the right direction and a feasible idea—the positive kind of thought process we need more of. But it is our opinion that this step will be long and drawn-out. It seems as if many of those leading the effort are seniors and, sadly enough, will not have the chance to see their plans begin to take shape.

Setting up a series of student discussions will not happen overnight. What we need is an entirely new student group. The high school's Student Group On Race Relations (SGORR) is set up to work on the sixth grade level, not the high school level. Juniors and underclassmen need to fill this void and should stand up now.

Principal Dr. Jack Rumbaugh and the administration appear ready to accept new ideas. It is time for students to take the first step. The school's backbone—the people who sit through the classes and walk the halls and eat in the cafeteria—need to come together with the goal of helping ease racial tension in any way that it is needed.

Groups like Students Working for Academic Excellence (SWAE) and SGORR have been recent by-products of student senior projects and in just a few years have prospered into major school organizations. Juniors, sophomores and freshman have over a month to set up the logistics among themselves, make the student body aware of their efforts and find a faculty adviser so that it can be in full gear once the fall term begins. The very first step—and probably the most difficult—is verbalizing the need for change and acting on it together.

To borrow a quote from Malcolm X: "We want it now . . . no, not now . . . yesterday. Today isn't soon enough." People Against Racial Tension Yesterday (PARTY) could be the group's name and could meet regularly to set up effective ways to rid the school of its easy-to-find, hard-to-solve racial troubles. The group could strive for wide membership and ultimately work towards an all-school awareness program. Specific guidelines could be set this spring—like biweekly meetings with the principal.

Although the biggest leaps forward still have to be taken, the need to improve race relations at the high school has been verbalized and, we believe, realized. Surely, students are realizing that if something needs correction, they've got to be the ones to initiate action. After all, students are the ones who know most about the problems and who, better than them, is there to right them.

the RITE IDEA

SHAKERITE

Letter points to year of progress

Twelve months and eight tiring editions ago, the Shakerite received a single letter to the editor. That this issue merited 25 is a telling sign. When I took over as editor-in-chief, my primary goal was to turn the school newspaper into a publication that the student body would read seriously. And when our readership responds in such numbers, it points directly to the progress we've made. At last, I feel we've done that.

As people send letters, it shows we are being read critically. When we're being read critically, at least we are being read. Our April edition, though received with mixed reactions, was read thoroughly by classes upon distribution. People began to show they cared. A sign of life arose from the students. It is extremely satisfying knowing that the paper now has some direction and is touching upon issues that affects the school.

Last June, this staff covered the closed campus situation, the transition of principals, the senior directory, an "A to Z" year-in-review spread, the perplexing barricades story and a staff editorial headlined: "Project needs revision, not rejection" in a 16-page edition. By the first week in the fall, we had an edition waiting for the students. The next one contained several timely stories and a personality profile on the intriguing Collin Moyaya. Our third issue focused on the AIDS epidemic. In December, senior Ron Johnson's letter to the editor spurred a three-part black achievement series. The next issue, besides continuing AIDS and black achievement stories, shed some light on the subject of teenagers having to deal with death, as told by former staff member, Ian Johnson. In April, we put out a double issue; centering around racial problems at the high school, but also including the story of custodian John Wetzel and a four-page insert on "Teens and Drugs."

Looking back on it, we've really come full circle. The progress has been steady and I feel we've brought the Shakerite up to a high standard. I'm excited to see continued progress and, though I am sad to have to let go, I am also confident that I'm leaving the Shakerite in capable hands. Subscriptions are on sale now for ten dollars; just call or write.

But before I get carried away with plugs for next year, I owe my appreciation to a lot of people. There are dozens who deserve credit and haven't gotten their share of it. Foremost has been associate editor Michelle Brode and adviser Sally Schwartz. The three of us have worked together for four years now and parting won't be easy.

Throughout the last year the superintendent, school board, high school principal, administration, faculty and community in general have been so supportive of us. People behind the writing, like business manager Jeff Edelman, do not get nearly enough credit—people like Jodii Fanaroff and Laurie Friedman and Joanna Mercer and Steve Kleiman. Our success would not be possible without their work. To these co-workers and all our readers, I'd like to sincerely say—thank you.

—PETER J. NAGUSKY
Editor-in-Chief

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TENSION, CONT.

To the Editor:

Freedom is a privilege we all possess. However, we have not all acquired the ability to use it. Failure to search for options and take action leads to lost oppurtunity. Whites complain that activities such as dances, talent shows and certain sports are dominated by the black population; yet, where are the whites exercising their right to participate? Blacks complain of the scarce number of roles they play in theatre productions, yet the audition lines are rarely very colorful.

I took advantage of the oppurtunity to be in the Shaker musical production last year, "The Apple Tree." I can appreciate the experience because I was able to use my observations and apply them to "People of Color."

Make no mistake, as a committee member of "People of Color," I am first to admit racial prejudice is an existing problem. The experience taught me a lot. Opposition was ever-present from the first audition. Spirits soared and fell like a cart on a rollercoaster. Tears were shed as a result of comments made by members of the staff. But each trial seemed worthwhile in exchange for the clapping of the standing audience and the fulfillment and pride we felt inside. Hard work and sacrifice is the only way to make a change.

History books are monopolized with records of numerous struggles. Slavery has been abolished and the march on Washington is over. What are we going to do with the freedom we have? It is useless to have it and not use it! Everyone, both black and white, has a right to obtain knowledge about history. Whites, Blacks, Jews, Protestants, Catholics and many other creeds make up our history. Anything short of this is an incomplete history lesson. Take advantage of what you have and make things happen. No one race can be liberated alone. Without the freedom of all, everyone is still bound!

—AMY ROBINSON
Senior

To the Editor:

I am a Shaker senior who participated in the play, "The People of Color," and the article that was written about us was not only controversial and misleading, but lacking a sense of truth. Yes, the play was directed by Mr. Harley, who put the play on as an experiment, but the quotes that were stated by the people in the play were a bit exaggerated.

Our play was not about "Black Power" and there were no such posters about it being presented in that way around the school. It's also true that Mr. Harley wanted it for one night, but after having the two assemblies and selling all the tickets, we tried to get it for another. We realized it would cost a lot to run it for another day with the lights and all, but we had the money. There also wasn't anything going on for the next day which was Saturday. With all the publicity we received, we wanted an extra night because not everyone who wanted to see the play got to go.

—ANGELA HALL
Senior

Remember: Letters to the editor must be signed and should be short and to the point. Some had to be edited or rejected in order to meet our journalistic guidelines.

THIS ISSUE, FOR AND ABOUT THE STUDENTS OF SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL, IS THE SEVENTH ONE OF THE 1987-1988 SCHOOL YEAR.

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the SHAKERITE
VOL. 58, NO. 7

☑ CSPA Silver Crown high school newspaper award winner

☑ Class A all-newspaper Golden Flash Award winner

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Let us hear from you! Letters to the editor for the upcoming issue will be accepted no later than June 1. They may be mailed or handed in to room 224.

SPORTS EXTRA

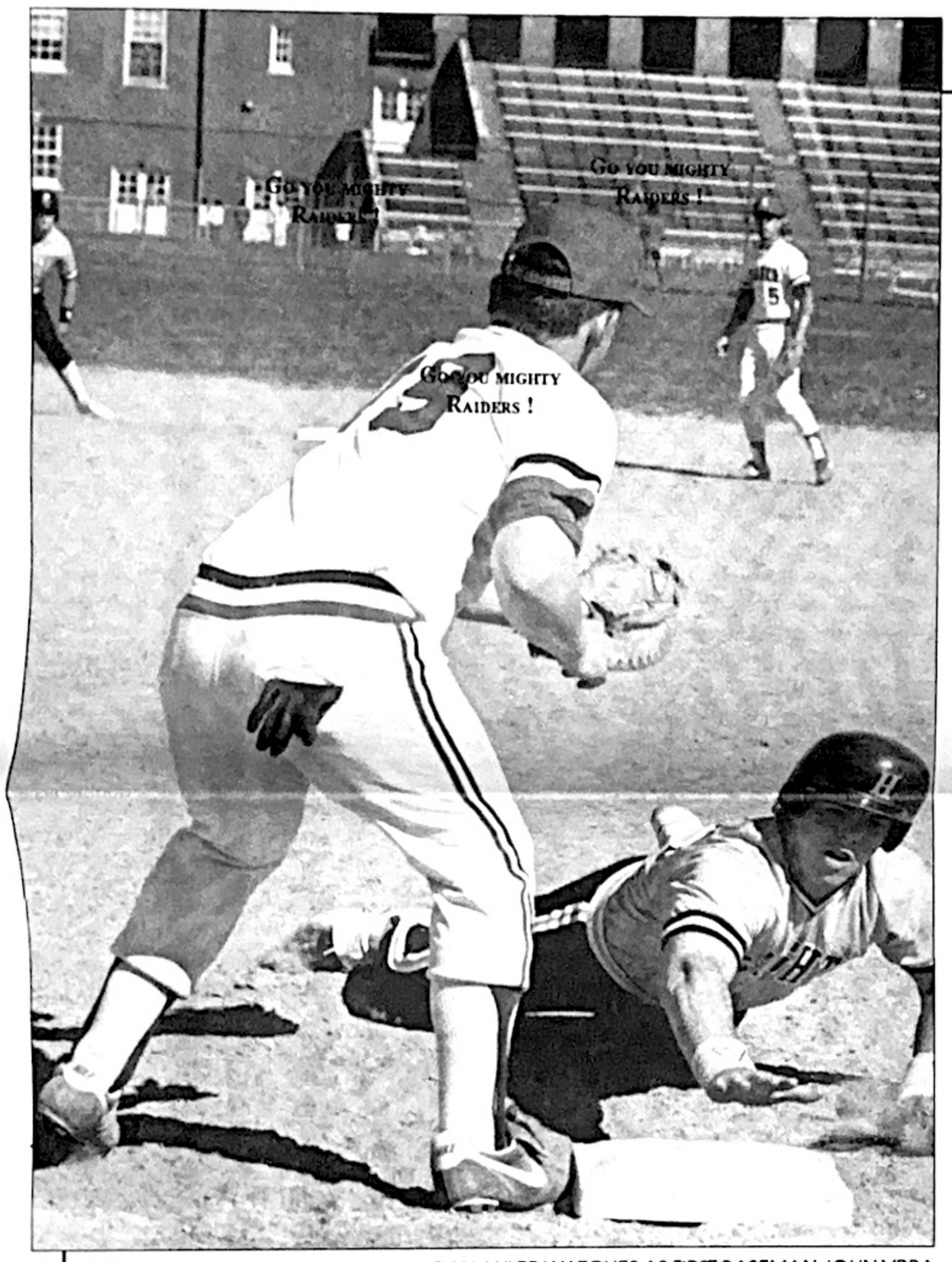
PAGE 5

AN INVESTIGATIVE LOOK

MAY 17, 1988

INSIDE:

- Lacrosse team springs into action page 9
- Track teams off to fast start pages 6 and 7
- Netters serve up wins page 8



PICKED OFF. SECOND BASEMAN NOAH AXLER WATCHES AS FIRST BASEMAN JOHN VRBA TRIES TO PICK OFF A HEIGHTS BASERUNNER IN THE MIDST OF A 9-2 SHAKER WIN. *PHOTO BY EVAN WEINSTEIN.*

Raiders slam Heights

Baseball wins 9-2

BY MATT LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Beating Heights is always nice. Crushing them is even better. And that's just what the Red Raider baseball team did when they defeated the LEL rival Heights Tigers, 9-2.

The Tigers went through three pitchers, none of whom caused the Shaker players much trouble. The Raiders drew first blood in the bottom of the second inning when short stop Tony Arscott scored on a centerfielder Jeff Dawson's single. First baseman John Vrba followed by cracking a two run homer. From then on, it was all Shaker. Keith Allen pitched the entire game and held the Tigers to only two runs, overcomming several tight situations.

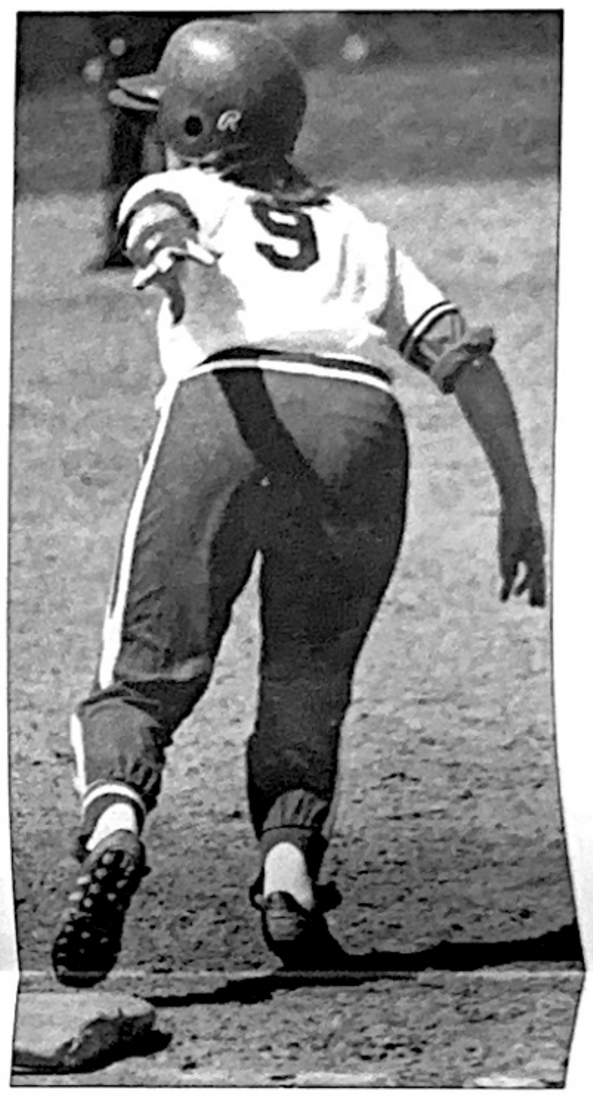
The victory, which brought the team's record to 7-1 in LEL games, first in the league boosted the Raider's morale for their sectional game against St. Ignatius. The Raiders beat the Wildcats 3-1.

"We've been kind of up and down this year," said pitcher Jon Mester, who went on to say how pleased the team was with their recent play.

"This is one of the most offensive teams we've had in a long time," said coach Charles "Buddy" Longo.

Mester echoed this confidence when asked how well the team thought they could do.

He said, "We're talking about states!"



ROUNDING THE CORNER. *SECOND BASEMAN KATIE HOMANS RUNS FROM FIRST TO SECOND BASE DURING A DOUBLEHEADER. PHOTO BY EVAN WEINSTEIN*

REACHING FOR THE SKY. FIRST BASEMAN EMILY DAWSON STRETCHES FOR A POP-UP AT A GAME AGAINST NORMANDY. *PHOTO BY EVAN WEINSTEIN.*

Welsch-inspired squad records 16 wins

High effort drives softball team

BY KRISTIN MCGOVERN
co-Centerpiece Editor

Batting and pitching their way into one of the best seasons ever statistically, the softball team hopes to slide into the LEL championship seat.

Their overall record is 16-5, 10-0 in the league and coach Ernie Welsch hopes the squad can finish at 12-0.

A reason for the team's high success is their intense practices. According to Welsch, they sometimes practice seven days a week.

"The great deal of time and effort put forth by the team is why we're successful. From the benchwarmers to the frequent players, there is always high effort," said Welsch.

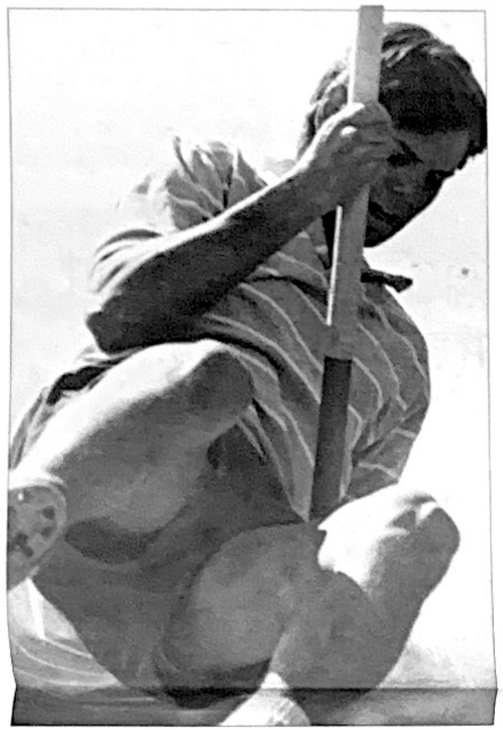
Even the players agree that the turnmout is derived from the practices.

> *"From the benchwarmers to the frequent players, there is always high effort."*
>
> —ERNIE WELSCH

According to designated hitter Nikki Neustadt, "[Practice] takes up a lot of time, but it pays off, as proven by our 16-5 record."

Reflecting Neustadt's attitudes, second baseman Ruth White commented , "Out of my three year experience on this team, this has been the most intense year. In spite of all of the problems we have faced, we have been able to compete with the best teams in the state and remain number one in the LEL."

The team, according to Welsch, is just that—a team. Everyone is there to support each other and congratulate each other, and according to Neustadt, "we even go out together."



GERONIMO! JUNIOR POLE VAULTER STEVE MANKA SUCCESSFULLY CLEARS ONE OF HIS ATTEMPTS AT A RECENT PRACTICE. PHOTO BY EVAN WEINSTEIN

RUNNING RINGS AROUND COMPETITION

High hopes boost boys' performance

BY AMY ROSEWATER
co-Centerpiece Editor

Plant the wooden pole into the ground and you are off—off the ground that is—not to mention over a 13 foot pole and back down onto a huge red mat.

"The first time you do a pop-up (pole vault practice), it's the ugliest thing you'll ever see. It only takes a couple seconds, but you feel like it takes a lot longer—and you fall in love with it right there," said senior Jeff Merhige.

Merhige first started pole vaulting as a sophomore. Coach Charles Richards "was a major influence on pole vault," according to Merhige. After watching tapes and attending pole vault camp, Merhige was finally ready to shoot for the school record of 13 feet—he has already cleared the 12-foot-6-inch mark and he is "confident" that he will break the record.

"This is probably the strongest [pole vault] team we'll ever have," senior John Marshall said.

The daredevils who catch "the fever"—the term used to describe the love of pole vaulting—participate in this sport because, according to Merhige, "it's dangerous. It's a sport for thrill seekers—it's a sharp right turn from reality."

The pole vault is not the only field event which deserves recognition.

Senior Verlin Bonner hopes to win states and repeat as district champion in the long jump. His record is 22 feet-4 and three-fourths inches.

Both Bonner's parents and his brother run.

"My father used to tell me [to run track], but I didn't do it 'till seventh grade. Track is boring," he said. "The only thing exciting is the meet."

Besides the long jump, Bonner also runs the 100, 200, 300 and the 4 by 100 relay.

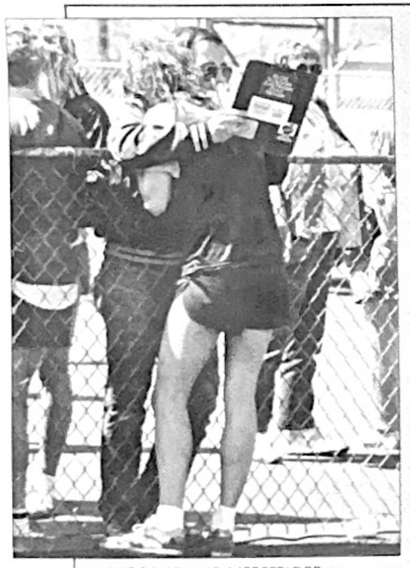
"[Before each meet] I pray and then I meditate. [During the event] all I think about is winning," he said.

"It's almost like pure concentration. It's hard to explain. You don't hear anything else. You don't hear the crowd. You don't hear the yelling. You only think of beating the person in front of you," said senior Otis Moss.

Besides running, Moss also participates in field events. He broke the school record for the high jump last year and this year he broke the indoor long jump record. Moss joined the team as a sophomore, basically because "the team needed a high jumper."

"I knew I was pretty fast and (junior) Steve Manka, a friend of mine, was in track," said junior Alex Henry. "He gave me the extra push I needed to come to one of the practices during the indoor season. After the first week of practice, I decided I liked it."

"It's fun to get excited when you win, but when you lose you have to remember that it's only a race and it's not that important," said Henry. "Track is like everything else—there's always someone better than you."



PHOTOS BY DAVID MERSFELDER

Reaching out to two extremes

Coaches vital to team performance, esteem

Track, like most high school sports, requires direction and motivation.

Day in and day out they are forced to different levels—always with a different face. One day, Red Raider coach Henry Woodard (see photo to the right) has to time the performance of his team. Another day, coaches (like the one shown to the left) need to serve as a comforting shoulder. Altough coaches are chosen for their ability to enhance athletic development, they fulfill other roles as well.

QUICK START! SOPHOMORE LONG DISTANCE RUNNER SONYA TRAYLOR CONCENTRATES ON FINISHING HER EVENT. PHOTO BY DAVID MERSFELDER

FAST FINISH. SENIOR SHORT DISTANCE RUNNER LISA SMITH SPRINTS FOR HER BEST TIMING AT THE RANGER RELAYS. PHOTO BY DAVID MERSFELDER

Girls' squad registers second-place LEL showing

Encouragement, close-knit team key to track victories

BY AMY ROSEWATER
co-Centerpiece Editor

Finish strong.

This is their watchword, their hope, their focus.

Some track team members attempt to tame their nerves by listening to Run DMC. Others cannot talk to teammates before their event.

And yes, some simply pray.

Whatever methods this year's girls' track team is using, they certainly are working. This year the team broke two school records. Sophomore Stacy Schlein broke the 3200 meter run record and a medley team consisting of Schlein, junior Dana Young, sophomore Gail Weiner and freshman Leslie Rosewater broke a distance school record.

"We're closing in on more records. We're further ahead on speed and endurance than last year," coach Henry Woodard said.

Coming into this year, Woodard had "no idea what to expect." The team lost four seniors who were on the team last year and this year's team is a "predominantly freshman and sophomore team." The young members of the team, or "the nucleus of young runners," as Woodard calls them, have provided "more young talent" than the team has had in a long time.

"Stacy Schlein is definitely the most improved runner on the team. Then comes (senior) Lisa Smith and then comes (sophomore) Sonya Traylor," said Woodard. "We've been finishing higher consistently than we ever have."

Woodard hopes the field events will reach the same quality of the running team. He feels the long jump team members are "pretty competitive now." Representing Shaker in the shotput are freshmen Juanita LeFlorn, Meredith Turner, Tisha Norman, LeVeeta Barker and senior Tamiko Darden. The freshman twin team of Melissa and Laura Nobert, freshman Kia Skrine and sophomore Kai Garrett participate in the long jump event.

The "close knit" makeup of the team helps add to the team's "key" to success. A nearby Bob Evans restaurant is not only the site of sausage and pancakes, but also of the track team's "wake-up breakfasts."

"This is one of the closest teams I've ever had. They're 'sistery,' " said Woodard. "They're not jealous when someone else does well—they're friends."

"We psyche each other up. We give each other a lot of encouragement," Barker said.

At the Heights-Shaw meet on May 3, cheers for teammates could be heard by the spectators even when Shaker runners were not winning. Teammates shouted, "Just go for time!" and other such encouraging comments in order to keep up the team spirit. At the Ranger Relays at Eastlake North High School on April 29 and 30, the Raider track team handed out praise as well as cups of water to their teammates after finishing each event.

As senior Andrea Bridges put it, "We inspire each other."

The runners themselves often times do not hear the cheers. Junior Betsy Banks sings songs while she is running.

"I focus on the finishing point—getting off the blocks as fast as I can and finishing," said Barker. "I try to be relaxed though."

UP, UP AND AWAY! SENIOR HURDLER LAURA HEGYES ADDS SPARK TO THE TEAM'S PREDOMINANTLY UNDERCLASSMEN TEAM. THE TRACK TEAM PRESENTLY IS SECOND IN THE LEL AND HAS HOPES OF MAKING IT TO STATES. WITH THE TEAM'S DAILY PRACTICES THE COACH'S INSPIRATION AS WELL AS THEIR MENTAL CONDITIONING IS THE FACTOR THAT GETS THEM THROUGH THE ROUGH PRACTICES AND WILL DETERMINE IF THEY GO TO STATES. PHOTO BY DAVID MERSFELDER

"This is one of the closest teams I've ever had. They're 'sistery.' They really like each other—they're not jealous when someone else does well"
—HENRY WOODARD

SHAKERITE

A NET GAIN. JUNIOR GOAL KEEPER JEREMY MARKS SAVES A SHOT DURING A SCRIMMAGE GAME. THE TEAM PRACTICES EVERY DAY ON THE FRONT FIELD OF THE SCHOOL. THEIR SEASON CONSISTS OF FOUR GAMES, AND SO FAR THEY ARE 2-0.

Senior project creates lacrosse

BY SARAH DAVIS
Staff Reporter

A new tradition has begun at Shaker. A tradition which demands protective equipment, including a mandatory helmet with a face-guard. A tradition originally called "bagataway" by the Huron Indians, but is now referred to as lacrosse.

The Raiders Lacrosse Club was established by Warren Johnson and Scott Harris for their senior project. There are currently 27 team members.

"We hope and expect for it to turn into a varsity sport [at Shaker]," said Johnson and Harris. There are already varsity programs at St. Ignatius, University School, Western Reserve Academy and Walsh.

"It started out as a senior project but that's not what it turned out to be," said Jim Dery, a private businessman, who coaches the team as a volunteer. He was on the varsity lacrosse team at Brown University. The Shaker club is not school-sponsored and must provide for its equipment, transportation and all other expenses from its own finances.

"We have a coach who's not a teacher, and so he's really interested— not just interested in the coach's salary," said junior-Louis Willacy.

Many team members, according to senior Justin Wagner, "haven't heard of lacrosse or picked up a stick before." The team practices out on the field hockey field, which is shorter than the regulation 110 yards long. But according to sophomore Brad Richer, "it's long enough to practice on."

The team won their first scrimmage on May 3 against St. Ignatius and their first game on May 10 at University School.

At a club meeting on April 28, Dery told the team, "We're really building the season around the two games with U.S. (the second is May 17). We're still a good week away from where I'd like us to be."

Early into the season, the coaches showed that they meant business, however. Four people have been asked by Dery to leave the team because they did not attend practice regularly.

One of these was sophomore Dara Rosenkranz, the only girl who tried out for the team.

"Dara took three weeks to get her gear together," said Dery. "I also excused three men who had only attended a few practices because of lack of attendance . . . but we were prepared to let her take her knocks with the rest of us."

Sophomore Jeff Katz said, "If she wants to play that's fine with me. It's a rough sport."

Rosenkranz complained of harassment from her teammates because she was the only girl on the team. "I think the reason I was told I couldn't play is pretty obvious," she said. "It's called discrimination."

Despite this brush with controversy, the club is looking forward to its season. According to junior Jordan Kahn, a few kids tried to get a team going last year, but were unsuccessful. Johnson and Harris attribute much of the success of the club to Dery.

"Jim [Dery] has given us a lot of help. We couldn't have done it without the coach," said Richer.

Next year, Dery will not be living in Cleveland, so a new coach will have to be found. Johnson and Harris are optimistic.

"We wanted this year to be a chance for the underclassmen to get to know this sport," Johnson said. "Next year, maybe it will become a team, not just a club."

The sport's name is derived from the stick (la crosse) which has a small basket at one end to catch the ball. Lacrosse is the oldest sport of North America, as it was played by the Native Americans long before colonists landed in the New World. Ten players are allowed on the field at one time.

Wagner describes the sport as a combination of basketball, soccer, hockey and the position of a football running back. Coach Jim Dery said that in 1987, 400 high schools started lacrosse programs, and a professional league will begin playing in 1989.

'Quiet' sport receives loud cheers

Tennis coach, players stir up winning spirit

BY JOSH LEVY
Staff Reporter

Due to the wide acceptance that the sport of tennis is a quiet game for reserved, upper-class members of country clubs, one might shun the idea of loud cheering across the court during a match.

It is these spirited antics of the high school boys' tennis team, however, that have lifted them to a 12-1 record this year, according to its members.

"Our spirit and emotion on the court is imperative to our success," senior George Jenkins said.

At times, many coaches and players of Shaker's opposing tennis teams frown upon the noisy outbursts of Shaker's squad, but Raider coach Allan Slawson does not discourage them.

"Tennis is an individual sport, so by expressing their spirit, the players unify themselves as a team," Slawson said. "As long as they don't yell anything out of line, I don't mind."

According to Jenkins, representing Shaker gives the team an added incentive to play well. Jenkins added that having Slawson as a coach is a definite benefit to the team.

"Slawson is assertive, yet quiet. He keeps us on our feet," Jenkins said.

Freshman David Joseph said that Slawson relates extremely well to the players and "he's going to help you, unless you're dead wrong."

Slawson is not the team's only inspiration, though. Top-ranked senior Pep Llinas is a key ingredient to the tennis team's motivaion.

Joseph explained that before a match, Llinas will round everyone up in a circle and tell the team exactly what it has to do in order to win. Then the players put their hands in the middle of the circle, shouting, 'Awwww Boy!"

"[Llinas] is Shaker's best tennis player in the last 20 years," Slawson said.

According to Slawson, Llinas is closing in on his 100th victory at Shaker. No one has ever achieved this feat here before.

Llinas' playing ability is balanced this spring with that of the twelve other players on the team.

"This year's success is due to the great depth the team has," Joseph said. "While there are three singles spots and two doubles teams, there are a lot of good people who can fill the varsity positions if the time comes."

1988 LACROSSE CLUB

POISED FOR PERFECTION. BACK ROW: JEFF KATZ, JEREMIAH RENWICK, COLIN COSTIN, SCOTT HARRIS, HENNING KICKBUSCH, PAT ROBERTS, LOUIS WILLACY; MIDDLE ROW: JAMES SINDELAR, JOHN HOMANS, ADAM PORTNER, MIKE ECKER, WARREN JOHNSON, BRAD RICHER, CHRIS BEAMAN, JEREMY MARKS, REGGIE BARKER, GIFFORD CARTER, FRONT ROW: CHRIS BRAIG, BILL ARMINGTON, DARRYL WILLIAMS, NOEL ALEXANDER, JUSTIN WAGNER, COACH JIM DERY. NOT PICTURED: IAN FRIEDMAN, AARON HENRY, STEVE MANKA, GREG MILLER. *PHOTO BY PAM OSTUW.*

Students earn gold in math, science

PLAYING THE GAME. GOVERNMENT TEACHER JERRY GRAHAM, BEING USHERED BY POLICE CHIEF BEN COWAN, ENTERS THE SHAKER HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL COURTROOM FOR HIS APRIL 27 TRIAL ON GOVERNMENT INTERN DAY—A CHANCE FOR STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN CITY GOVERNMENT. GRAHAM WAS FOUND GUILTY OF RESISTING ARREST, BUT RELEASED ON CHARGES OF GAMBLING AND COERCION. PHOTO BY EVAN WEINSTEIN

the BRIEFS
SHAKERITE

SCIENTIFIC OLYMPICS

In the annual Chemistry Olympics, juniors Warren Phipps and Ashley West took the second place team trophy in first-year competition. Seniors Jessica Lefton and Rachel Smith received a third place team trophy in second-year competition. The day-long competition was held at North Olmstead High School, and the team is coached by chemistry teacher Clair Rankin. Also, seniors Courtney Loveman and Kristin Marlow, the first all-female team from Shaker, won the paper tower building competition at the Physics Olympics. Their 86.6 inch tower had to remain standing for ten seconds in order to qualify. The Physics Olympics was held April 30 at Cleveland State University.

MATH-LETES

Several Shaker students who participated in the 1988 American High School Mathematics Examination (AIME) received awards. The mathematics team of Benjamin Goss, David Ernst and Kevin Fleming placed 19th out of 501 participating Ohio schools. The top 50 students on the AIME test were invited to take the United States Mathematical Olympiad on April 26.

NEW STAFF ANNOUNCED

The 1988-89 Shakerite editors have been selected. The new editor-in-chief is Amy Rosewater; business editor, Steve Kleiman; front page, Josh Levy; news, Kristin McGovern; opinion, Austin Ratner; centerpiece, Sarah Davis; feature, Caryn Markus; sports, John-Phillip Neill; advertising, Matt Lazarus; circulation and public realtions, Joanna Mercer; photography editor, Evan Weinstein; art editor, Rick Smith. Also, there will be teams to help assist in the growing individualized journalism process: a layout team, ad team, photo team and art team.

The new staff will be in charge of putting out the final June issue.

A TRIBUTE

The Spanish Club and the Foreign Language department has created the Don Travis Memorial Scholarship Fund. It will be an annual award to a senior in an advanced level of Spanish who characterizes the ideals Travis worked toward.

FUNDS FOR FLOWERS

The annual PTA geranium sale will be Saturday, May 14 in the girls' gym from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Funds will be used to sponsor various activities in the school and community— such as teacher and student scholarships, contributions to student actuvities, the athletic department and community organizations.

ENDING HUNGER

The Hunger Project is a worldwide organization which is commited to ending world hunger through education and fund-raising by the year 2000. Dr. Karl Hess is interested in starting a Youth Ending Hunger club here at the Shaker Hts. High School.

Last year, Youth Ending Hunger clubs across the United States raised 250,000 dollars for immunizations in Chad and Ecuador. Anybody interested in joining five million others around the globe working with the Hunger Project can contact Hess by calling 291-1100 or 295-2335.

—BY ANDREW JORGENSEN, GRACE DEJESUS, STAFF REPORTS—

Over-the-counter drugs keep teenagers on top

BY MANDY ERICKSON
Special to the Shakerite

Like a lot of other people, Tanya Winston says she just can't wake up without a cup of coffee in the morning. But the 16-year-old student from Danville, Calif., also says she can't write a paper anymore without first swallowing several No-Doz tablets to keep her going.

"Every time I have a paper to write, I take a couple," says the B-plus student. "Then I get a glass of Coke to wash it down."

A few cups of coffee or an occasional caffeine pill have helped many students survive a rough pre-exam evening. But as the pressures to succeed in and out of school have increased, a growing number of self-described college-bound high school students say they are using over-the-counter drugs or household products, like vanilla extract, to help get through the day.

It is difficult to estimate the number of high school students who regularly turn to legal substances in order to cope, because they rarely show up in addiction or counseling centers. But students interviewed at half a dozen San Francisco Bay Area high schools estimate that as many as 50 percent of their classmates regularly use caffeine tablets and huge doses of coffee and Coca-Cola to keep them on the fast track.

David Alma, a college-bound senior in Washington, D.C., says he's used to being "hyper." "When I'm down, or not as hyper, I drink some Jolt or Coke. Some of my friends use stuff like No-Doz when they have papers due, but not just for the hell of it."

Patrick Morgan and Norm Grimes, both seniors in Ela Cer- [illegible], Calif., are debate partners on their high school's forensics team. They say they could not win their debates without an extra boost from caffeine before and during the debate.

"Before the [National Qualifying] tournament, I didn't eat any breakfast," Grimes said. "Hunger gets you aggravated, it's kind of neat. Before the first round I drank four cups of coffee, and one cup between every following round. I only ate a bagel for lunch, and I didn't eat anything else until ten that night."

"I like to get up before the sun comes up... and sit next to the Coke machine with a roll of quarters and just drink until the tournament starts," added his teammate Morgan.

Although caffeine will help keep students awake, it generally won't help improve the quality of work, said Greg Hayner, a pharmacist at the Haight-Ashbury Medical Clinic in San Francisco. "Stimulants are basically detrimental to concentration. It's hard to organize your thoughts and put them down in a cogent manner. What you get is a kind of rambling flow of consciousness."

The physical side effects of caffeine can be quite serious, particularly for adolescents. Howard McKinney, a clinical pharmacist at the San Francisco Poison Control Center, said most teens will start to see the toxic effects of caffeine after taking 400 milligrams—four No-Doz tablets, two strong cups of coffee, eight cans of Coke.

"It can give you serious cardiac arrhythmia. Your heart's not pumping blood like it should," McKinney said. "It can also cause seizures, and it is also associated with strokes. It increases body temperature to a degree that could be life-threatening."

While caffeine overdose is rarely fatal, McKinney said, "larger doses are certainly going to cause medical problems. We see a fair number of people [in the poison center] who simply drink too much coffee."

Other students say that over-the-counter substances, like antihistamines found in cold medicines and alcohol found in cough syrups, help them lessen the anxiety of social pressures outside of school. Sixteen-year-old Suzanne Johnson, who attends a private school in San Francisco, says she limits her drug use to an occasional cigarette or wine cooler, but "when push comes to shove," she turns to substances like vanilla extract, which contains alcohol, and nail polish remover, which causes mild inebriation when sniffed.

Like many students interviewed, Johnson said she resorts to household substances because they are easier to obtain, less expensive and not illegal. "It's easier, it's safer, and your mom's not going to care. What's she going to say? 'Oh my god, the vanilla's gone!' "

Even though these substances can be purchased legally by minors, Hayner says it is important to remember that they are not any safer than illegal drugs. High doses of caffeine can have a greater effect on the heart than standard amphetamines, and "solvents like nail polish remover are worse than most illegal drugs as far as health is concerned," said Hayner. They can also be addictive.

Rose Ann Soloway, coordinator of the National Capital Poison Center at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C., agreed that over-the-counter drugs cause side effects and long-term damage to the liver, kidneys, optic nerve and psychiatric disturbances.

—FROM NATIONAL YOUTH NEWS SERVICE—

Hair of a difference

Punk population expresses individualism through appearance

BY JOSH LEVY AND CARYN MARKUS
Staff Reporter and Feature Editor

Walking down the crowded hallway, a vertical green hair piece catches your eye. Your first reaction, perhaps, is to stare; your second, to wonder whether or not it is authentic and your third is to question, why? Like many phenomena, we have come to label such sights with a familiar term—punks.

Although the punk population at Shaker has steadily grown, few people know the motivation for such a radical change in outward appearance.

"I've always wanted to go against the grain—to go with every impulse. I'm rebelling against the way society expects me to look, and at the same time, letting out tension," explained junior Jessica Skerry, who, at the time wore a black mohawk. "I do not want to slip into the moral majority."

By becoming a non-conformist, punks are prepared for criticism and misunderstanding.

"Most comments are really rude, but some people will come up to us and say they admire our courage and independence," sophomore Qandle Qadir said. "I think it would be silly for me to cut my hair this way and not expect people to stare and say things."

Many adults believe the present forms of music and violence seen in both movies and television are in direct correlation with punk expression. A 1985 U.S. News and World Report investigation urged parents to establish stronger values when their children begin to imitate the stars. They cited the groups Black Sabbath, Motley Crue and Iron Maiden as instigators of "shifting styles to dramatic clothing and haircuts, school grades slipping and sweet natures turning irritable."

Attention-getting is widely regarded as the primary motivator, however.

"My gut reaction is that they are really needy for love and attention and want to be noticed. That's fine, the only thing that bothers me is their kind of expression," social studies teacher Penny Freidman said. "I, personally, do not find it attractive."

SHAKERITE ARTWORK BY RICK SMITH

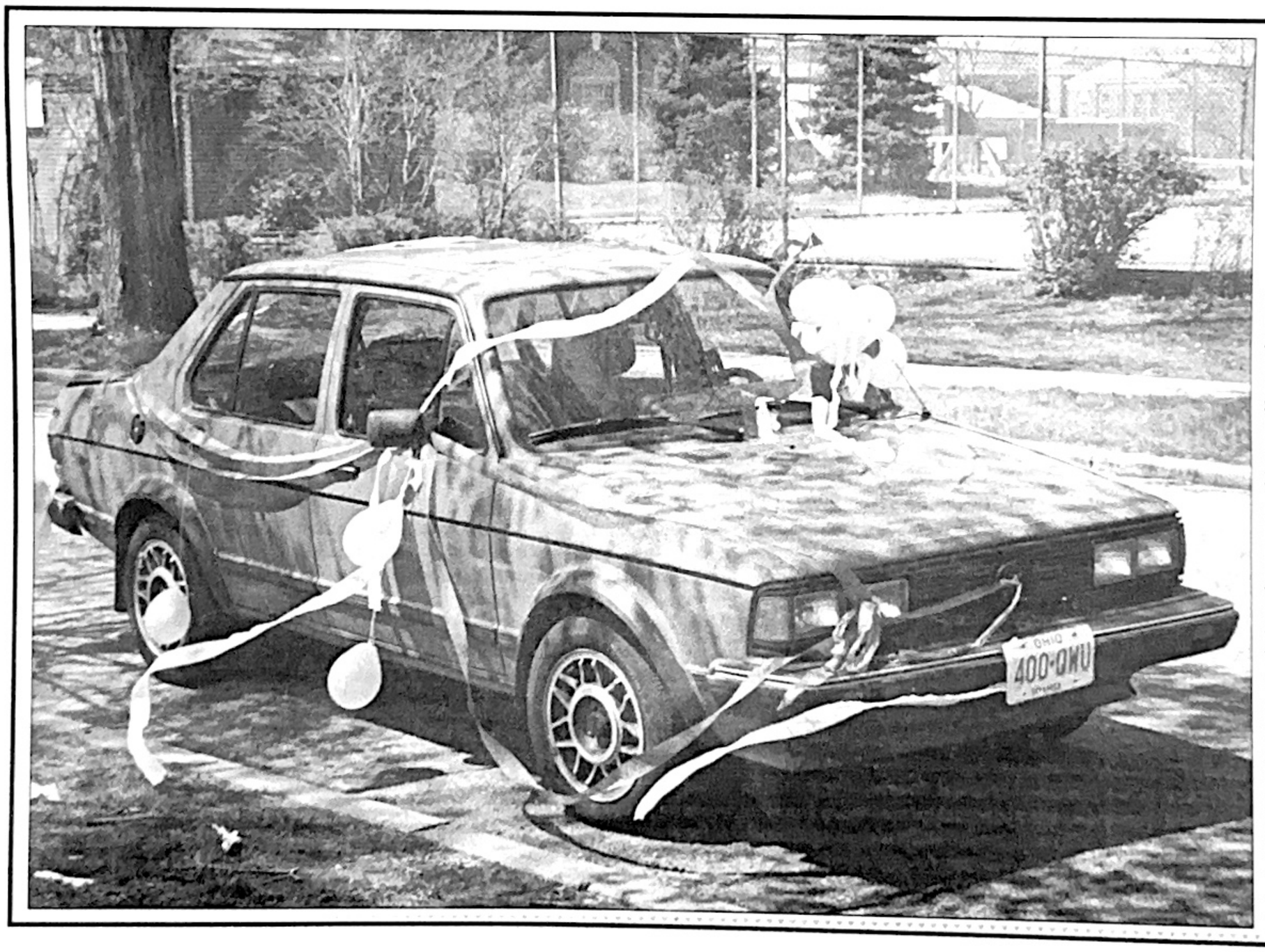
"I think this rebellion is stupid. I'd like to see them in 10 years," expressed junior Marc Schwachter.

Although this punk identity is chastised by some, social studies department head Terry Pollack believes the idea is a "very innocent way for kids to express their individuality. People are different, and each person should present himself in his own unique way."

The Shaker cross country team and boys swim team seem to agree that these remote hairstyles are simply an innocent form of expression. Psyching themselves for their district meet, each member of the cross country team shaved his head in letters spelling out "Shaker." And in preparation for their district meet, the boys "Dirty Dozen" swim team shaved their heads in bizarre haircuts both for spirit and less weight while swimming.

Sports teams are not the only people at Shaker who seem to have the desire to shave their heads. In fact, this ambition is contagiously spreading to the faculty.

"I'd always had a dream to staple a mohawk on top of my bald spot," Pollack declared.



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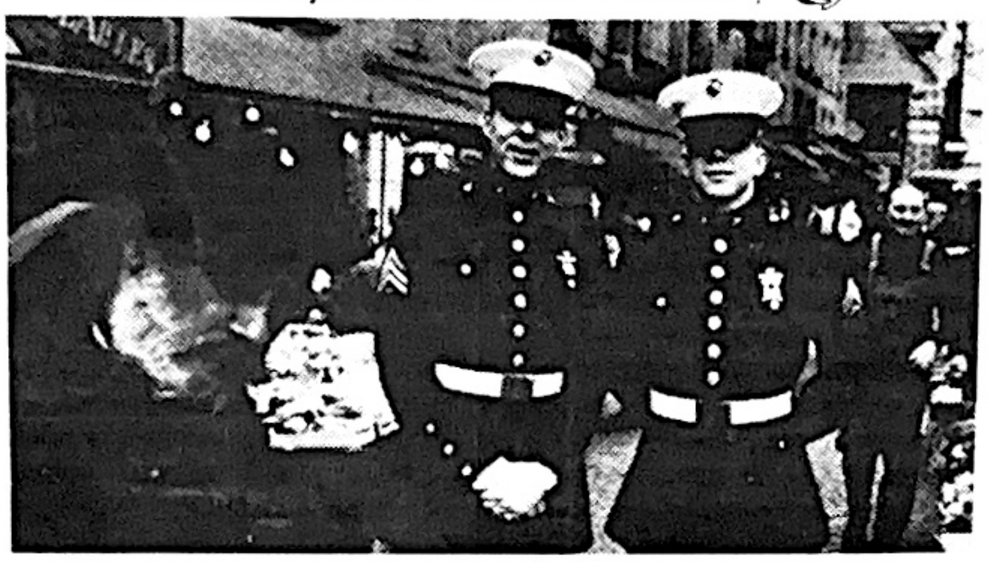

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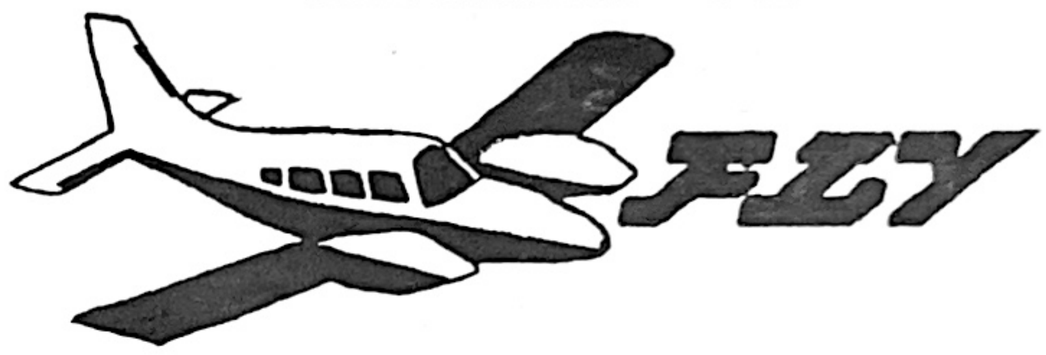

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